

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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EXDIS

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, XF

SUBJ: GOI POSTURE RE SETTLEMENTS IN AND RETENTION OF
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

REF: STATE 159161

SUMMARY: DURING MY JULY 24 CONVERSATION WITH
FONMIN ALLON, I RAISED US CONCERN OVER ISRAELI PRESS
STORIES ON PLANS TO ESTABLISH NEW SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES AND ADVERSE EFFECT THESE STORIES COULD HAVE
UPON NEGOTIATIONS. ALLON RESPONDED SYMPATHETICALLY TO MY REMARKS
AND SAID THAT HE WOULD MAKE ADDITIONAL EFFORTS TO KEEP STORIES
ON THIS SUBJECT OUT OF PRESS. I ASKED ALLON TO PROVIDE US WITH
UP-TO-DATE INFO ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED
TERRITORIES, WHICH HE PROMISED TO DO. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD
ALSO BRIEF HIMSELF ON THIS SUBJECT PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE
FOR WASHINGTON.. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MY CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN ALLON ON
JULY 24, HE RAISED SUBJECT OF SETTLEMENT IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
IN CONTEXT DESCRIPTION OF " ALLON PLAN." (SEE SEPTELS FOR OTHER
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SUBJECTS COVERED.) I TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE WITH HIM

OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE STEADY STREAM OF ARTICLES IN ISRAELI PRESS RE ALLEGED PLANS TO ESTABLISH NEW ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. I ADDED THAT, AS ALLON KNEWZ, SUCH PUBLICITY CAUSED NEGATIVE REACTION AMONG ARABS AND WAS HARMFUL TO MID EAST PEACE EFFORTS. ALLON WONDERED IF OUR CONCERN WAS BEING EXPRESSED ON BASIS OF PUBLICITY GIVEN TO PRIMIN RABIN'S TOUR JULY 23 TO SETTLEMENT S IN THE JORDAN VALLEY WHICH WAS GIVEN PROMINENT PLAY IN ISRAELI MEDIA. I REPLIED THAT MY COMMENTS WERE NOT TIED TO ANY ONE PARTICULAR EVENT OR ARTICLE BUT TO THE GENERAL PROBLEM. THE PUBLICITY GENERATED BY RABIN'S TRIP WAS, HOWEVER, PART OF THE GENERAL PROBLEM.

2. ALLON WAS QUITE SYMPATHETIC IN HIS REACTION, NOTING THAT HE WAS AWARE OF MY PREVIOUS CONVESATIONS WITH MRS MEIR ON THE SUBJECT, AS WELL AS THE SECRETARY'S EXPRESSION OF CONERN. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUBSEQUENT TO THESE CONVERSATIONS, THE GOI HAD MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT WITH THE PESS AND GOVERNMENT ORGANS AND HAD SUCCEDED, AT LEAST FOR SOME LIMITED TIME, IN REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF PUBLICITY BEING GENERATED. ALLON TOLD ME THAT HE HAD AGREEMENT WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON SETTLEMENTS THAT THERE WAS TO BE NO PUBLICITY AS A MATTER OF POLICY REGARDING ANY PLANS RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SETTLEMENTS. UNFORTUNATELY, HE NOTED, THE SYSTEM WAS NOT AIRTIGHT AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO ENFORCE THIS DISCIPLINE ON THE VARIOUS OFFICES OF THE JEWISH AGENCY AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES. HE EXPLAINED THAT OFTEN AN ITEM CONCERNING ALLEGED PLANS FOR SETTLEMTNS IS PICKED UP BY THE PRESS IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY THROUGH A LEAK BY A NON-GOVT OFFICE -- HE MENTIONED PARTICULARLY LONDON -- AND WHENTHAT HAPPENED, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP IT OUT OF THE PRESS IN ISRAEL.

3. ALLON THEN STATED THAT HE WAS CONVENING ALL OF THE EDITORIS OF ISRAELI NEWSPAPERS TO A MEETING JULY WT IN THE HOPES OF GETTING THEIR COOPERATION IN LIMITING PRESS PLAY ON SENSITIVE ISSUES AS ISRAEL ATTEMPTS TO MOVE FORWARD INTO THE NEXT PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ARABS. HE VOLUNTEERED TO ADD SETTLEMENTS TO HIS LIST OF ITEMS THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE PLAYED DOWN BY ISRAELI PRESS. (HE NOTED, IN THIS RESPECT, THAT HE HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE WITH THE ISRAELI PRESS JUST BEFORE

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THE ARRIVAL OF PRESIDENT NIXON TO URGE THEM NOT RPT NOT TO GO OVERBOARD IN THEIR CRITICISM OF THE US DECISION TO SUPPLY A NUCLEAR REACTOR TO EGYPT. HE ADDED THAT HIS SUCCESS IN THIS ENDEAVOR CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF TH PRESIDENT'S VISIT HERE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT HE PAID A PRETTY HEAVY POLITICAL PRICE FOR TAKING THIS ACTION IN THE FEW WEEKS AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT BUT IT WAS WORTH IT SINCE HE WAS PROVEN RIGHT -- AND HIS POLITICAL STOCK WAS ON THE RISE.)

4. I TOLD ALLON THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL TO US IF WE COULD HAVE CURRENT AND ACCURATE INFO ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN THE TERRITORIES SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR, INCLUDING NEW STARTS. I ADDED THAT WE WERE ALSO INTERESTED IN ANY PLANS ISRAEL MIGHT HAVE FOR MOVING AHEAD ON THIS FRONT IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS OR SO. ALLON TURNED TO HIS ASSISTANTS AND TOLD THEM TO GET THE INFO FOR US FROM THE APPROPRIATE OFFICES OF THE GOI AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES, SUCH AS THE JWISH AGENCY. HE ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF HE HAD UP-TO-DATE INFO ON THIS GENERAL SUBJECT WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON. I THANKED HIM FOR HIS COOPERATION IN THIS MATTER AND AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO BE BRIEFED ON THE SUBJECT SINCE I ASSUMED THAT IT WOULD FIGURE IN HIS CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON.
KEATING

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